

### **Nurse Hat:**

Many women who wanted to serve in the armed forces became nurses. Like being a secretary, clerk, or communications specialist, nursing was seen as an appropriate career for women in the Navy. Becoming a nurse was the only way a woman could serve at sea (aboard a ship) until laws changed in the 1970s. Even after new careers opened to women, many women continued to proudly serve the Navy as nurses.



## **Typewriter:**

In addition to nursing, women were typically assigned to the role of secretary, clerk, or communications specialists. These jobs were the only positions considered safe enough, and proper, for women to hold. However, during the 1960s and 1970s, more women began to enter the work force. These women wanted to have a variety of jobs and dreamed of becoming pilots, shipboard sailors, and even Navy divers.



## **Helicopter:**

In the mid-1970s, the Navy began allowing women to attend flight school.

Joellen Drag-Oslund was one of the first women to complete flight school.

She quickly moved up to flying her own helicopter. Even though she had been approved to fly helicopters, outdated laws prevented her from landing on, or even hovering over, a Navy ship. Drag-Oslund joined an ongoing lawsuit in 1976 to fight for rights equal to her male counterparts.



### ***The Black Panther: Intercommunal News Service:***

The Black Panther Party was a political group that formed in 1966. Associated with the Black Power movement, the Black Panther Party advocated any means necessary to accomplish its goal of black equality. The group published a weekly periodical that highlighted events significant to the African American community. This issue, dated November 16, 1972, takes aim at the U.S. Navy. The article was published just weeks after the USS *Kitty Hawk* riots and suggests that, counter to the Navy recruitment slogan, “You **Can’t** Be Black and Navy, Too.”



## Judge's Gavel:

Just as the judicial system was used to improve life for African Americans and women during the Civil Rights Era, it was also used by women in the military. Workplace disadvantages for women in the Navy were extreme.

Laws banning women from serving at sea meant it was much harder for women to advance their careers. In 1978, Yona Owens won the case *Owens v. Brown*, in which she sued the Navy for the right to serve aboard ships.



### **Children's Picture:**

During the 1960s and 1970s the role of women in America began to change. Women were expected to play a major role raising children while increasingly working outside of the home as well. In the Navy, women were frequently forced to choose between a career and a family. Laws slowly began to change but for most of the 1960s, a mother was not allowed to serve in the Navy until her child was over 18 years old. This same rule did not apply to fathers, as evidenced through this homecoming photo from 1973.



During the 1960s, legislation dedicated to increasing opportunities and protecting civil rights passed Congress. The Civil Rights Act of 1964 was a landmark piece of legislation that supported the goals of the broader Civil Rights Movement. This pamphlet was published to provide an overview about the new Civil Rights Act and how citizens could use their rights as outlined in the legislation.

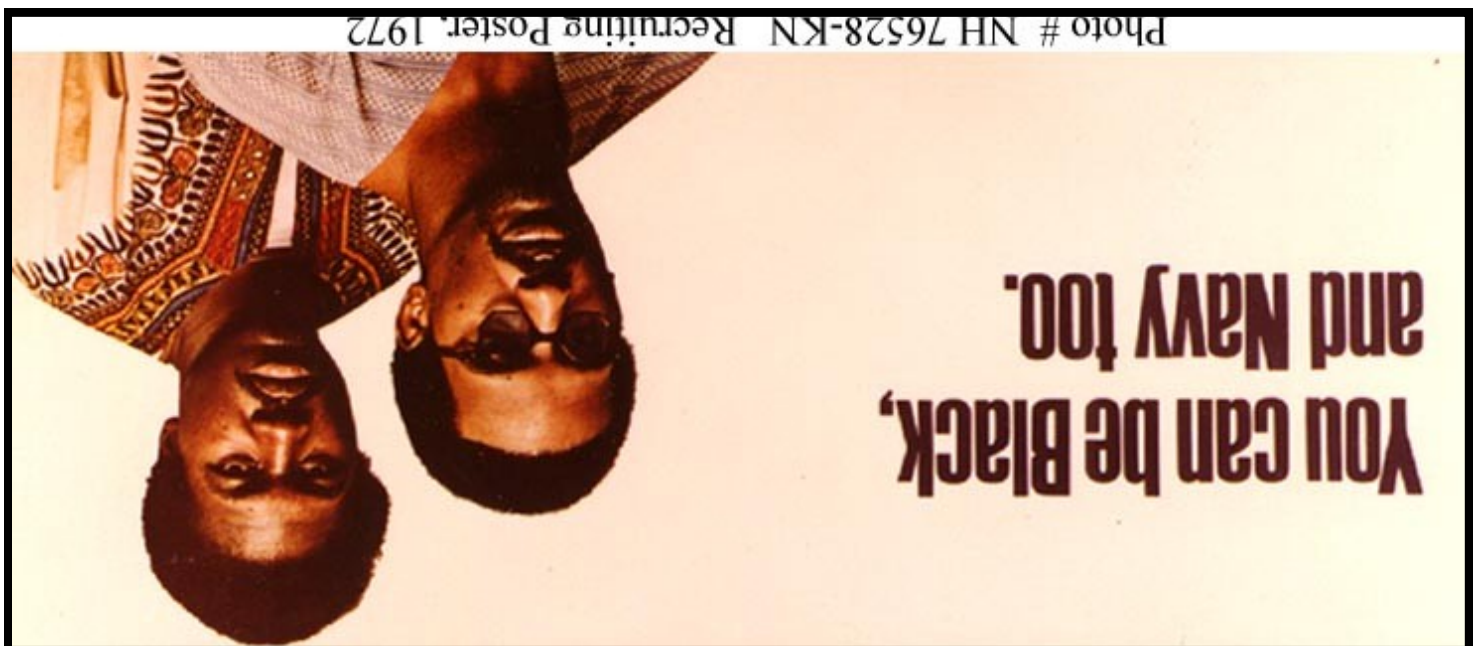
## Shoe Shine Kit:

Just as women were subjected to occupations based on gender, African Americans were often forced to work as stewards, cooks, and in supporting roles due to racial discrimination. Black sailors saw the Navy discriminating in job placement, and this led to frustration and increased tension. (See photo for evidence of racially influenced job placement.) In the 1970s, the Navy began to implement changes and practice affirmative action. Equal opportunities at work and at home would be pushed under Admiral Zumwalt's Z-grams.



### **Hair Pick:**

Admiral Zumwalt wanted to make the Navy more modern by recognizing changing patterns in United States society. Zumwalt allowed African Americans to wear Afro hairstyles and keep their facial hair in an effort to demonstrate consideration for cultural differences. His relaxing of these rules was part of his attempt to entice African Americans to join the Navy. Additionally, Zumwalt ordered ships to carry African American-specific hair products, like hair picks. The poster seen here is a recruitment poster from the early '70s. This is another example of the Navy's attempt to overcome the stigma that the Navy was not friendly to African Americans.



## 8-Tracks:

New technology in the 1960s and '70s made it easier to record music and helped the entertainment industry boom. Before CDs and iPods, sailors would have used 8-tracks to listen to music. Bands such as Blood Sweat & Tears and Chicago were popular during this time period. During the height of the Civil Rights Movement and the Vietnam War, musicians often used their voice to protest as well as record the experiences of sailors, soldiers, and changing feelings across American society.



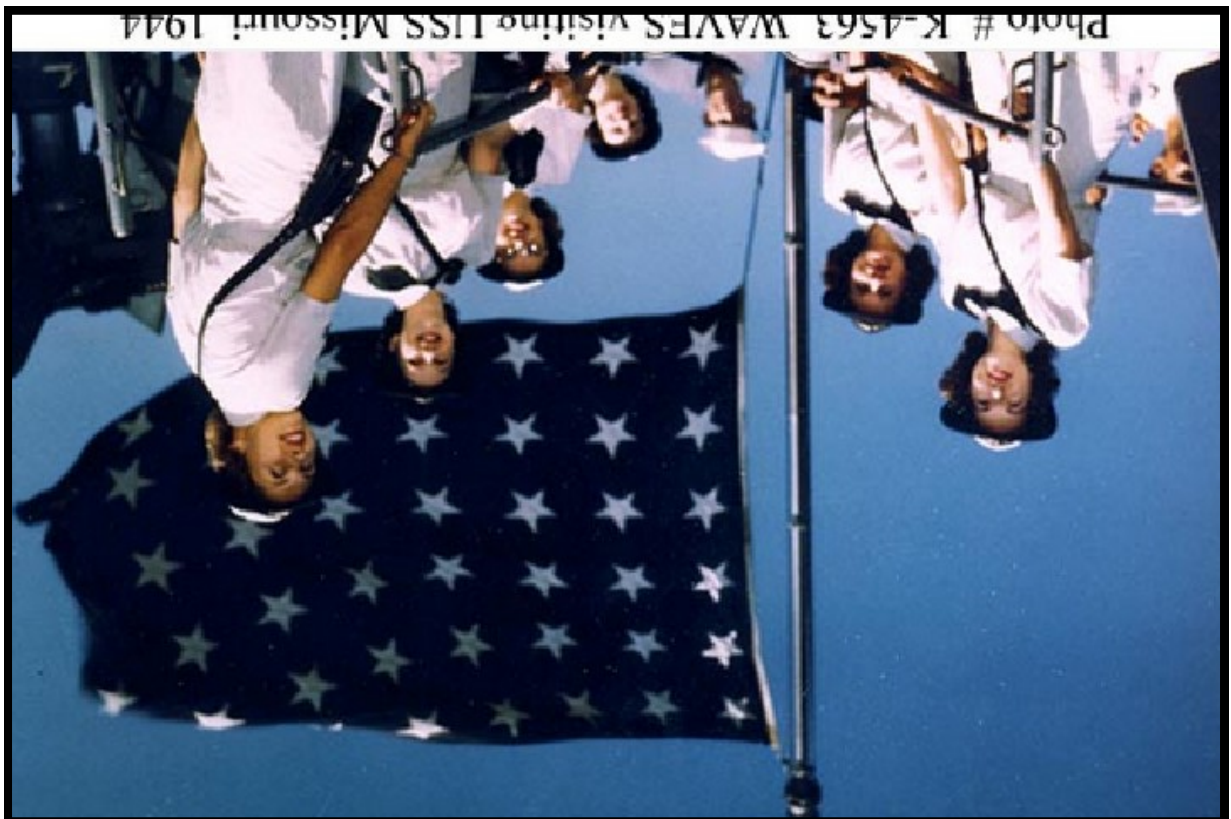


### **Women of the Year:**

In January 1976, TIME magazine reflected on the changes in American society regarding the roles of women. According to the article, “The belief that women are entitled to truly equal social and professional rights has spread far and deep into the country.... 1975 was not so much the Year of the Woman as the Year of Women—an immense variety of women [were] altering their lives, entering new fields, functioning with a new sense of identity, integrity, and confidence.” The article featured Kathleen Byerly, a Navy lieutenant commander, shown in this image.

## U.S. Navy Jack:

This flag is called the Navy Jack. It is flown on all U.S. Navy ships at the bow (front) of the ship. The United States Navy experienced many of the same changing patterns as American society, including expanded educational and economic opportunities for women and minorities during the decades following World War II. By studying life in the Navy during the 1960s and 1970s, we can better understand the transformation of the United States during the Civil Rights Era.

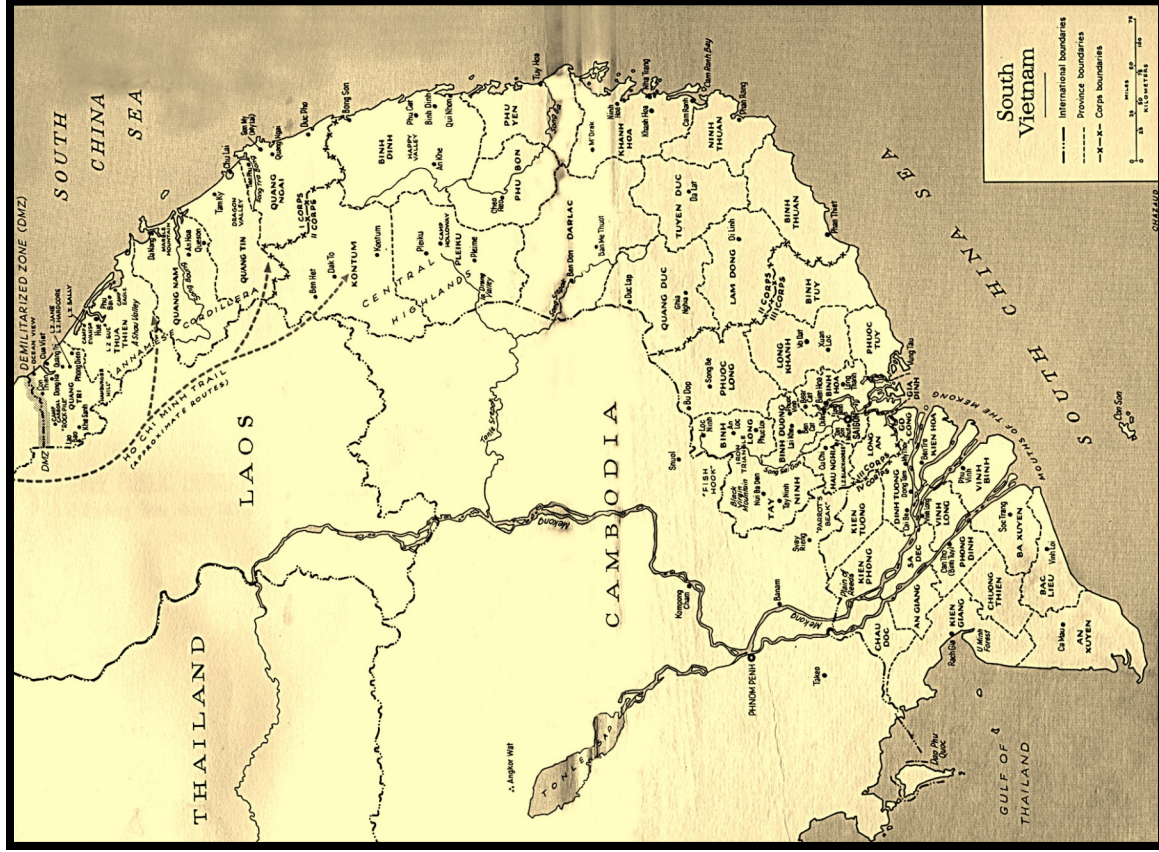


## Officer's Hat:

In 1970 women made up just 3.5% of the officers in the Navy, and African Americans were even more poorly represented. In 1971, fewer than 1% of Naval Officers were black. By implementing new regulations and creating an affirmative action plan during the 1970s, additional officer positions began to open up to women and minorities.

Did you know? Women were issued different hats (called “covers” in the Navy) from men to accommodate “proper” hairstyles of the time.





## Safe Conduct Pass:

Leaflets or flyers like this one were provided to sailors who went ashore in Vietnam. Sailors often kept items like this as mementos or mailed them home to family members. This Safe Conduct Pass serves a similar purpose to a hall pass in school. If stopped by a security detail, this pass provided proof of your allegiance. This flyer is a reproduction of one in the Hampton Roads Naval Museum collection.

## Women's Uniforms:

Women's uniforms were not always designed to make it easy for women to enter male-centric jobs. Imagine trying to dock a ship or climb up ladders wearing a skirt. Furthermore, it was not until the late 1970s that the Navy created a maternity uniform option for women. In this photo from 1973, the color guard is standing on a dock to welcome a returning ship wearing mini-skirts. Uniform policies like this made it difficult for women to command the same respect that men in Navy uniforms received.



### Wedding Photo:

Military spouses are entitled to benefits, including medical and housing relief. However, during the 1960s the same benefits that were available to wives of sailors were not equally available to female service members' husbands. Sharron Frontiero had applied for a housing allowance for her husband and was denied the claim. She took the case to court to challenge the constitutionality of the rule. Ruth Bader Ginsburg, current Supreme Court Justice, represented the Frontiero family for equal dependent rights for male spouses. The case was decided in favor of the Frontiero family in May 1973. This photograph shows Ginsburg in 1972, about the time she helped create the Women's Rights Project (or WRP) under the American Civil Liberties Union. The WRP worked to advance the rights of women in the United States.

